

SPRING GAP M A R C

Access the Internet with No Monthly Fee

Our presentation for November will be on the topic of free Internet access. Alice Law with **freewwweb™** will explain the benefit offered by this three-year-old company.

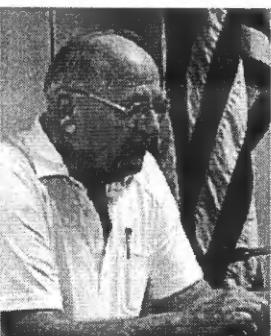
Smart World Technologies, LLC, which own **freewwweb™**, started in the business of reselling cellular telephone service. After becoming the 13th largest in the country, they began looking at other ways to fulfil the communication needs of their customers. In the summer of 1996 they launched **freewwweb™** as the first national provider of Internet access that was advertiser supported. After paying an initial start-up fee there are no monthly access charges for unlimited usage.

By offering free technical support and connection speeds up to 56K the service has continue to gain in the marketplace. Satisfied customers refer others to **freewwweb™**. It is a complete Internet service provider with e-mail, FTP and the World Wide Web.

Their Network Operations Center is built around multiple SGI and Sun UNIX based servers. These servers have multiple processors and possess significant quantities of RAM. Every component of the servers is completely redundant to prevent down time.

Join us Saturday to learn the details of accessing the Internet with no monthly charges.

President Creates Committees



W8ISH

Our club president, Al (**WA9ZET**), has finalized his appointment of members to serve on two new committees.

The first group was formed to help with items that are technical in nature. Tasks will involve matters of the repeater and controller, the club website and domain name, technical training and activities, and other projects they may be charged to fulfill.

Technical
Vern (N9QBO)
Charlie (N9MEW)
Dennis (KB9RWS)
Hershel (WD9GMM)

Drafting
Dave (KA9OOH)
J.R. (KB9HSE)

The second group will be researching and drafting changes to the by-laws or constitution as needed to meet the recent motions presented by the club membership.

Still under consideration are members to serve in the duties related to activities, membership, public relations, and awards. Names will be released as future committees are activated.

Club Meeting Saturday, November 21st, 8:00 AM
EOC, 1100 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

Membership

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club is based in Franklin, Indiana. Membership is open to all amateur radio operators and other interested persons.

Club meetings are conducted on the third Saturday of each month in the training room of the Johnson County Emergency Operations Center at 1100 Hospital Road in Franklin, IN.

Membership dues are \$18.00 per year for full members. Other types of membership are available.

Amateur Radio Operator License testing is offered following the club meeting during the months of March through November.

The club maintains an open repeater on the 2-meter band at 146.835 MHz. Each full member has access to the repeater and autopatch.

Membership dues payment and change of address should be mailed to the club treasurer at the address listed below.

Newsletter

The Spark Gap is the monthly club newsletter. Articles and information that would be of interest to the club members are welcome. Information may be submitted by E-mail or by mailing to the club address listed below.

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Dave Wendt (KA9OOH)
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wendt@indy.net

Activities Director

Vacant
Volunteer Needed

MARC, PO Box 836, Franklin, IN 46131



Annual Picnic Steaming Success

Fun Filled Day at Train Park

It was a perfect fall afternoon for a train ride, as members of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club gathered at Mt. Nebo station in Morgan County.



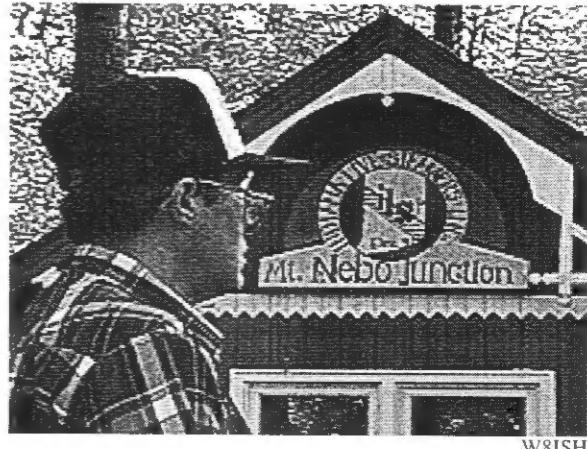
W8ISH

Mt. Nebo, the home of the Live Steamers club, is a 1/8th-scale railroad that winds through the hills and hollows of northern Morgan County.



W8ISH

Kids from seven to seventy-five enjoyed riding on hand built rail cars over the trestles and through a tree lined landscape awash in bright fall colors. This was the sixth annual pitch-in picnic. It provided a feast of entrees for the two dozen members and their families. Everyone said they look forward to hearing the "All Aboard" call at next years Live Steamers picnic. -W8ISH



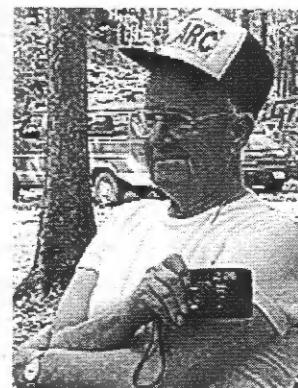
W8ISH

Steve (N9NZI), a MARC member, is standing in front of the Copley R.R. Station. This is an exact scale model of the train station in Copley, OH.

The Indiana Live Steamers offer the use of the park to visitors at no charge. For the past several years the Steamers have invited the MARC members to the park for our annual picnic.



W8ISH



W8ISH

The members of the MARC say "Thank you" to the Indiana Live Steamers

Satellite Question Answered

"Where and When?"

The absolute orbit of a satellite is a variable item. In order to pinpoint the physical location of a satellite at a given time, much use is made of computer tracking software. Orbital or tracking information called Keplerian elements provide the computer with a snapshot of a satellite tracking record. The software uses this information to predict the future pattern for this satellite. With Keplerian elements and tracking software, it is

easy to determine when a particular satellite will be above the local horizon.

The World Wide Web offers many resources for satellite tracking. The Mir spacecraft orbital information can be found at the website address http://liftoff.msfc.nasa.gov/temp/Mir_loc.html. This site provides a graphical representation of Mir's location, which is updated every minute.

Fright Night Not So Scary

MARC Members on Patrol

Halloween for Amateur Radio operators in Johnson County didn't turn out to be as frightening as some expected.

Over two dozen Mid-State Amateur Radio operators took to the county roads in an effort to assist local authorities in preventing Halloween pranks. Fair and cool weather made for a busy beggar's night.

 One incident involved several northern Johnson county units. The Johnson County sheriff asked for assistance

in locating a costumed male who was slashing open children's candy bags in the Carefree North addition. Goblin patrol units responding to the area could not find the suspect. No other serious incidents were reported.

During the night interstate overpasses, cemeteries, schools and other locations were checked periodically for vandalism. This is the 12th year Mid-State ARCC members have operated the Goblin patrol. **Keith Cohoon, (K9PDI)** served as the net control operator. W8ISH

Widgets, Inc.

Tests New Software

The marketing department and the engineering department of Widgets, Inc. had been having fierce battles over information concerning the development and release of the company's products. All reports from the engineering department required extensive reworking before the information they contained could be released as promotional material.

Having an inside source at a large software-programming firm, the marketing department managed to secure the beta version of a new language translation program. This software was state-of-the-art utilizing artificial intelligence to decipher and translate the meaning of complete sentences and phrases.

After installing the new software on the company file server, wonderful things began to happen.

The chief engineer sent the following report to the head of marketing:

I would like to give you the dismal results of our progress. When the customer first requested this product, we told you it couldn't be done. Our CEO demanded we have a working product in 26 weeks. Well after 46 weeks we had a prototype. When we turned on the power it blew up! The development team all quit. Being hopelessly lost, we hired three kids just out of high school. They now have a breadboard

design that barely works. However, we are so far behind that the customer will take anything. Besides, since no one else makes this, what choice do they have?

The plastic mold for the case is screwed up so it really looks weird. We had to remove all of the controls but the power switch because of the case problem. If it breaks, there is no way it can be fixed. We think we will have a finished product ready to ship in about 12 weeks.

After traveling through the main computer, this is what was received by marketing:

We have wonderful news to announce! We were very excited to accept the challenge to develop this technological marvel. With full support of our CEO we were determined to break our previous time to market records. A prototype was ready almost immediately. After discovering minor glitches, we began with a fresh approach.

We are now pleased to announce the release of our new widget. Customer satisfaction will be assured with our exclusive design. We have a new futuristic housing and a foolproof operating mode. It is totally maintenance free and is ready for immediate shipment!

Jamboree on the Air

Scouts Experience Radio Hobby

Over 400,000 Scouts around the world were invited, in October, to participate in the 41st Jamboree on the Air (JOTA). This international event took place Saturday, October 17th through the 18th.

MARC members **Rick (KB9NDF)** and **Brian (KB9BVN)** helped local Scout troop 120 join the activities from the Southport Park in Indianapolis. These two experienced operators provided assistance for the Scouts in the setup and operations of station and antenna equipment.

While the Southport group was running 50 watts into a little dipole, Rick's brother **Dave (AA9KT)** was

working with the West Point cadet radio club using 1500 watts into a 7-element tribander on a 100-foot



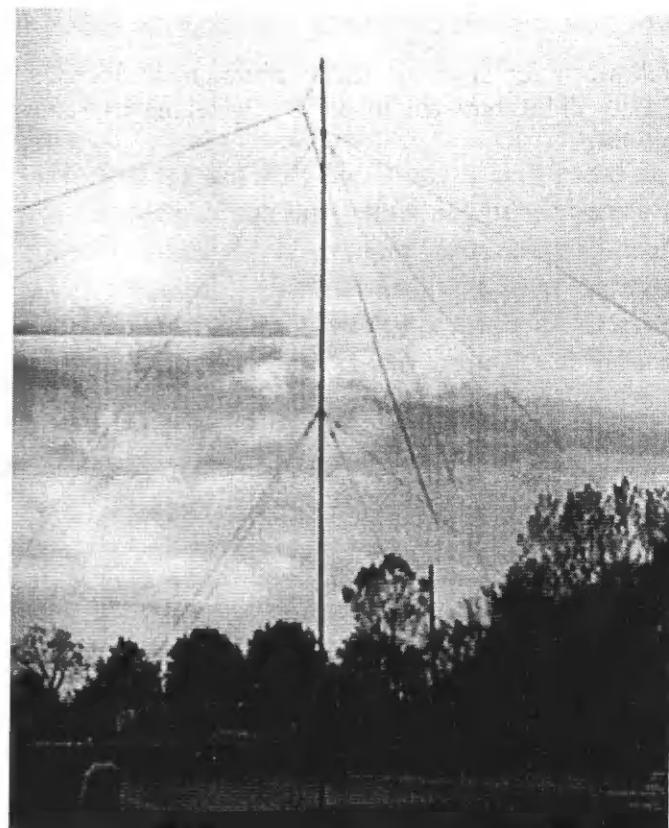
Tom Hickey

tower! "I borrowed a portable 40' mast from a friend. We set that thing up with my newly built 40/80 meter dipole," said Rick. The Southport group worked a "bunch" of other Scouts. "We even worked the USS Yorktown! It's not everyday that a guy works an aircraft carrier!"

JOTA is like a Field Day for kids. The occasion gives veteran hams a chance to set up antennas and demonstrate different modes of radio communication, including packet, RTTY, SSTV, and HF digital modes, as well as voice. Rick suggests that MARC "adopt" a local troop and participate as a club activity. This could be "a second chance at Field Day without the heat" he says.

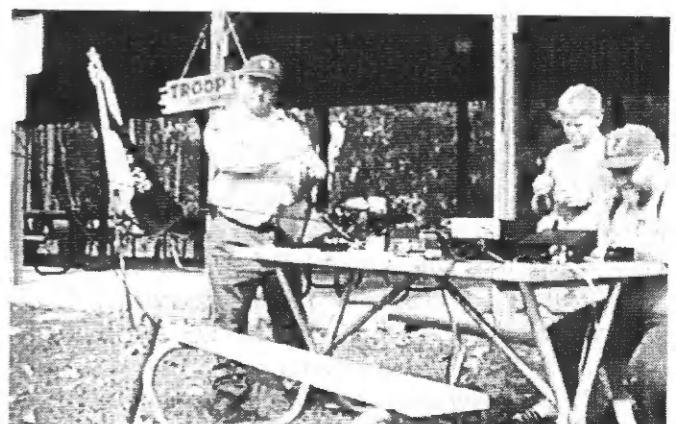


Tom Hickey Brian generated a lot of interest in the construction aspect of the hobby. "This seemed to really interest the dads," he said. He also



Tom Hickey was prepared to operate his QRP station but was disappointed because of a broken tuner.

A good time was had by all as contacts were made throughout the country. Besides working the USS Yorktown in South Carolina, the group also worked a lot of stations on the East Coast and in Illinois and Wisconsin. Contact also was made with K2BSA, the Boy Scout national office station in Dallas, TX. The group did make contacts on CW but mostly used SSB operations



Tom Hickey

AMSAT Update

Waiting For Ride

While most Americans were watching the success of the Discovery mission with Ohio Senator John Glenn aboard, Indiana hams were getting an update of Amateur Radio's latest communication satellite, Phase 3-D. **Gerd Schrick (WB8IFM)**, is a member of the ham radio space project. He recently spent two months in Orlando, Florida working on the international communications project. In a briefing to the Central Indiana ATV & UHF association, he said the satellite has been undergoing last minute thermal testing at a research lab in Germantown, MD. The test simulates the extreme temperatures the equipment will have to withstand during its life in space. The satellite has an internal heating and cooling system to help regulate the temperature extremes. All mechanical moving parts have been designed to work suspended in a magnetic field so they don't have to use ball bearings or lubricants that can lock up or wear out.

Phase 3-D planners are looking for a free ride on one of the Arienne rockets in 1999. They had hoped to find a ride on Arienne 3, but were sidelined at the last minute. That rocket blew up shortly after launch.

If successful, the satellite may be placed into an

elliptical orbit making it accessible from 8 to 24 hours a day. Most amateur radio satellites are in low earth orbit and are usable for about 20 minutes per pass three times a day.

So, why should the average ham get excited about a new space going transceiver? According to Schrick, "It's the most complex and expensive ham radio satellite so far." It was designed with all hams in mind. Phase 3-D measures three feet high, seven feet across and has a total span of twenty feet when the solar panels are deployed. The 1380-pound vehicle has 39 electronic modules, 26 antennas and can transmit up to 250 watts. All that from solar charged batteries. It is expected to be one of the most user-friendly Amateur Radio satellites ever launched. The matrix patching system that will allow ground controllers to set up almost any type of VHF, UHF or microwave QSO. It's high altitude and on-board power will allow most hams to use it without a lot of expensive equipment. It's definitely an Amateur Radio tool for the future.

You can learn more about Phase 3-D by visiting the AMSAT web page at www.amsat.org. Donations are still being accepted to help defray costs. -W8ISH

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Business band, CB's and scanners.*

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Fax 317-898-1574

Wittfield St. is the first street east of Post Road on Tenth St.,
then north on Wittfield to 1217 (RED MAILBOX)

Amateur Radio Auto License Plate

The Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles requests that all applications for the Amateur Radio license plate be submitted by the end of December. This will ensure that the plate will be delivered at the proper time in 1999.

These official plates are a great way to display your participation in a hobby that benefits many people with its public service activities.

First time applicants must bring proof of call letter ownership. This is not necessary for plate renewal.

The application fee is only \$5.00 more than the cost of a regular license plate. Applicants should apply with the license branch in the county of their residence.

The BMV website is: www.bmvexpress.org.